

on in time, the building to the north would have been saved, with only nominal damage. It was said that four lines of hose were kept playing on ground flames which could do no further harm, instead of being turned on the Larus building.

Captain Charles F. Taylor and Fire Chief Joyner said that they fought the fire as scientifically as they could, and that water was not thrown uselessly on any part of the fire.

**Worked Under Difficulty.**  
"The fire jumped the alleyway," said Chief Joyner, "and got under the other roof. The Williams factory was lower than the other, and the flames had easy access. Had there been a parapet wall we might have prevented the damage. But no man could live in that alley. Bricks were falling all about us, and the tobacco smoke, the worst in the world, would have snuffed out our lives. Fire under a roof is hard to fight, and we had to work against it from the start. You will find that the inside of the building is not so much damaged as one would think from looking at it from the outside. Fire it looks as if the building were gutted, but you follow me."

His words were true, for damage by fire was not so extensive as it had appeared to be from the outside. The roof was burned and fallen in, but the top floor was practically untouched by the flames. Of course, all the tobacco on that floor was burned and destroyed, but below, on the other floors, no fire had found its way. Water poured through, and the building was wet from top to bottom. But in places, from the stock had not been touched by the water, and Chief Joyner believes that the damage will be found to be not so great as it had been imagined it would be from outward appearances and quick judgment.

"Curious fire fighters," said Chief Joyner, "are always ready to criticize. We expect it."

**No Serious Injury.**  
The greatest danger which the firemen faced was from falling bricks and debris and the dense, overpowering smoke. Several men were trapped, and had to be rescued by their fellow fighters. It was fortunate that the fire began at the noon hour, when many of the employees were at lunch. All escaped without difficulty except three men who were trapped in the Williams building, and they were taken from the adjoining roof.

The Williams building sank in shortly before 1 o'clock. Only the walls are left standing. Absolutely nothing was saved. Then all attention was paid to the Larus building. Firemen swarmed inside, fighting the flames. All the men of No. 10 Company were caught by the suffocating smoke, and sought safety on the fire escape. Bricks fell in a shower about them, and they were called down. They slid, hand over hand, down the hose. Chief Ruffo was rescued by comrades. He didn't realize his danger until called out.

**Men Worked Valiantly.**  
The men of No. 1 Truck were trapped on the roof just before it fell in. Smith and Pegram of that company were overcome by the smoke, and were rescued by comrades. Two men of No. 7 Company also had to be rescued, having been overcome by the smoke. Whatever might be the judgment as to the management of the fire, no one questions the valor of the men, nor their willingness to risk their lives in the line of duty.

"I never saw them men work harder," said Chief Joyner, "and we had to watch them to keep them from sacrificing their lives."

It was 4 o'clock before the fire was under absolute control, and before that time it often looked as if it would get away. From every angle, the front and rear, water was played on the flames. Both water towers were used from the Twenty-first Street side, and performed effective work. Underneath them Charles Gullett, connected with headquarters, cut hanging live wires from one he received a shock of 2,300 volts, which knocked him down and severely burned his hands. He suffered considerable pain from the shock.

Assistant Chief Wise also had a narrow escape from suffocation. He led his men back to rescue the men of No. 7. He was caught himself, and experienced great difficulty in making his way out to safety.

**Prisoners Returned.**  
At 4 o'clock, when the fire was under control, all the books and stock

## "Berry's for Clothes"



**Hats for Spring.**  
Hats in many shapes, shades and styles as fashion will sanction.

Hats that are leaders in London as well as in America. Hats that make the Berry Store noted for the best headgear.

Spring showing of Henry Heath & Co., London hats for men.

Spring showing of Dunlap & Co., American Hats for men. Special styles of Stetson & Co., soft Hats for men.

All supplied to the Berry Store exclusively.

Derby Hats. Silk Top Hats. Wool Felt. Tweed Caps. Saddle Hats. Velour Hats.

*O. S. Dwyer*

which had been taken from the burning building were brought back. At 6 o'clock the prisoners taken from the country jail were returned.

Thousands of people watched the fire, blocking the surrounding streets for two squares. Fire lines were stretched, and the people were prevented from entering the danger zone. Major Warner and Captains Barfoot and Epps were early on the scene with a force of fifty men, all of whom were kept busy.

The Williams building was owned by the Valentine estate. It was destroyed, but is covered by \$7,000 insurance. The stock, consisting of machinery, carried \$55,000, which covers the loss.

William T. Reed, president of the Larus Company, said he would be unable to estimate the actual damage until he had an opportunity to examine the building. It is owned by the George Pope estate, and is fully covered. The cut plug and drying departments were saved.

**Rebuild at Once.**  
Business will not be interrupted, stated Mr. Reed. Rebuilding will be started this morning. Contractors looked over the destroyed portion immediately after the fire, and made arrangements for beginning work immediately. The Cullingworth factory, on Main Street, will be utilized as a stemmy, and there will be no interruption, excepting, perhaps, for a few days. There will be no interference with the company's contract with the United States government to furnish the navy with tobacco for a year, and if trouble should be experienced, Mr. Reed felt sure that an extension of time would be granted.

The company employs about 300 men and women, and all of them will be put back to work as soon as firm footing is gained again.

Mr. Williams stated that his loss, including tobacco and machinery, would reach not more than \$35,000, possibly not as much as that. He has a large warehouse on Twenty-second Street, untouched by the flames, in which a large part of his tobacco was stored, and this explains why the loss was not greater. His damage is fully covered by insurance.

There will be no interruption of the Williams business. Mr. Williams said that he hoped to be in possession of a factory by Monday, when work would be resumed. This company employs 150 hands, and they will miss hardly more than a day from their work.

Even though Mr. Williams may not return to the old site, he will be able to find ample quarters, and the business will go on as though there had been no fire. The building which was destroyed in yesterday's fire was insured

for \$7,000, which is probably nearly two-thirds the value of the building, which was very old.

**STIRRING SCENES DURING BIG BLAZE**

Fire Crew Escapes Down Hose Line—Negroes Rescued From Roof.

As the fire gained headway the country jail filled with smoke, but before alarm could spread among the thirty-three prisoners Deputy Sheriff Snyder had arranged to have them removed to the city jail. Patrol guards hurried to the courthouse and the prisoners transferred without difficulty.

Dallas Wright and the two negroes, Richard Perkins and Ed. Jones, convicted murderers of Buchanan county, who are awaiting a new trial, were sent to the city lock-up in charge of W. N. Grubbs.

For some time it was thought that the jail was in danger of destruction, but as soon as the flames on adjoining property had been subdued the Henrico prisoners were returned to their cells. They were again under lock and key in the county jail before 5 o'clock.

**Firemen's Danger.**  
One of the most spectacular features of the conflagration was the escape of members of Engine Company No. 10, who were penned up on the third floor of the fire escape in front of the factory. Falling walls made it dangerous to return by the fire escape.

A hose line with which the crew had been playing upon the leaping flames was made to serve as an avenue of escape, and one by one the ladders came down, and the men were kept on all day, and it was not until late in the afternoon that the various engines reported one by one as back at quarters and ready to respond to a new call.

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